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HOSPITALITY IT CHECKLIST

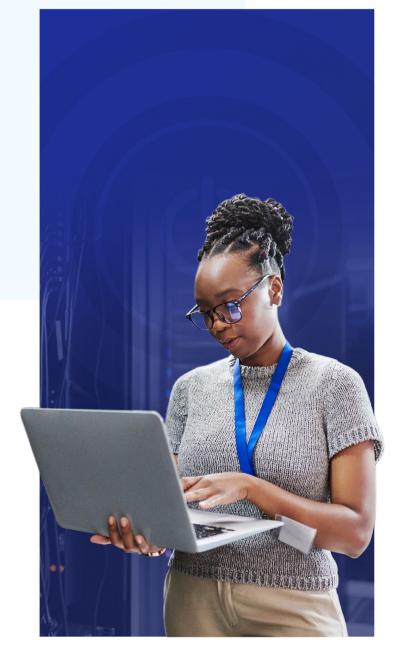# ARE YOU MISSING ANY NECESSARY IT SOLUTIONS?

The quality of your high-touch guest services is a key part of your hotel's quality as a brand overall. The better the experience you can create for your guests, delivering seamless comfort and convenience, the more likely they are to choose your hotel the next time they visit the area.

Have you considered the role your IT is playing in your high-touch service efforts? The IT solutions you have in place, and how well supported they are, can have a direct effect on the quality of your guests' experience at your hotel *(not to mention how well your staff can do their jobs)*.

That's why we've developed this checklist, to help you ensure you have the right IT components in place to achieve a seamless and reliable IT environment for both your staff members and guests.

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15 Must-Have IT Solutions & Best Practices For The Hospitality Industry

1. High-Speed Internet

Do you have the right internet speed for your hotel? Do you have enough bandwidth to cover your busy season? Can you scale up when needed to accommodate special events and other functions?

High-speed Internet access is foundational to an ideal guest experience—ensuring the reliability, speed, and coverage of high-speed internet is essential because slow, faulty, or unreliable internet services will scare guests away and make your staff's work lives more difficult.

2. Optimized Internet

Do you have more than one Internet provider for redundancy?

It is critical that guests always stay connected even if your local ISP is having an issue. With the increased use of video conferencing and VoIP calls, it is essential to have an ISP backup so your guests continue to enjoy streaming video and clear audio no matter what.

3. Reliable & Available Wireless Network

Is your Wi-Fi fast enough to meet your guests' expectations? Do you have the correct number of APIs placed in the optimal locations throughout your property to ensure full connectivity? Is your wireless network easy to access?

The modern guest expects fast, reliable, and effective Wi-Fi. It is critical that the Wi-Fi works in each room and that there are no dead spots throughout the property, including the conference areas.

4. Cloud-Based PMS System

Do you have a cloud-based Property Management System *(PMS)*? Does your PMS vendor offer an open integration platform so you can add additional third-party software? Is it convenient for your staff to use?

Your PMS is the backbone of your hotel operation. A cloud-based PMS system streamlines processes and allows more modern functionality, including the integration of mobile applications and the use of software across multiple devices.

It should offer your staff mobile capabilities along with essential modules to streamline their daily tasks including reservations, rate and revenue management, reporting, groups, and more.

5. Cybersecurity

Is your data secure, backed up, and recoverable? What would happen if your systems were infected with ransomware right now?

Data privacy is of the utmost importance. Ransomware attacks, phishing attacks, distributed denial-of-service *(DDoS)* attacks and human error all make hotels vulnerable to a cyber attack. In the event of a data breach could you afford to be down for days or even weeks?

6. Cyber Insurance

Do you know what to do in the event of a data breach? Do you have a process in place to comply with state and federal breach notice laws?

Without a history of good hygiene around cybersecurity you will be unable to secure cyber insurance and cyberattack coverage can help hoteliers prepare and mitigate for damaging breaches.

7. VoIP Phone Systems

Do you still have a conventional phone system? Is it easy and inexpensive to add new lines? Is your current phone service saving money and offering more features?

VoIP is a game-changer in the hospitality industry. It frees up dedicated phone lines, offers a virtual receptionist and automated call routing, online faxing, and many more benefits.

If you're still using an outdated system, you're undoubtedly paying more than you need to for fewer features than you deserve.

8. Outlet Availability

Do you have a detailed design plan that maximizes charging areas throughout your hotel? Is it easy for guests to find an outlet when they need it?

Installing and maintaining USB charging ports throughout guest-facing areas is critical to guest satisfaction:

- ✔ Smart bedside tables, alarm clocks, lamps, mirrors and/or consoles in rooms
- ✔ USB charging ports in public spaces and business centers
- ✔ Additional outlets added to guestrooms
- ✔ Wireless charging options where available

9. Platform Integration

Do all of your critical platforms work together reliably and effortlessly? Do your apps integrate with one another? Are your staff members doing extra work to deal with incompatible systems?

Hotels often use a combination of many different systems, such as PMS, CRM, and POS. Each system needs to integrate seamlessly for optimal functionality across platforms, otherwise, your staff will spend extra time filling in the gaps.

Furthermore, there must be a focus on data security and minimizing ongoing, costly maintenance and update requirements.

10. Internet of Things (IoT)

Has your hotel harnessed the advantages of the IoT? Is your hotel ready to confidently implement aspects of IoT without issues that affect guests or staff?

The IoT extends internet connectivity to everyday objects, making for a more convenient and seamless experience for guests. Potential applications of IoT technology include:

- Control many of room features *(television, lighting, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning)* with the guest's mobile device

- Access to location-based information *(menu items, shuttle information, or nearby events)*

- Guest streaming their own Apps

- Use of the guest's mobile device as a room key

- Voice-controlled room assistants that allow guests to request room service, make reservations, and more

11. Contactless Technology

Do all guest-facing tasks require attention from a staff member? Are you planning to increase the contactless options for your hotel? Do you know how they will affect other systems in your hotel?

Contactless technology will make both your guests' and your staff members' lives more convenient. Potential benefits include:

- Mobile check-ins and check-outs that allow greater flexibility for guests

- Digital Concierge that offers round-the-clock service and can respond quickly to guest requests

- Contactless payment that allows for online payments from different devices and various payment methods

- Room occupancy status

12. Growth and Scalability

Can your systems scale up to accommodate new property acquisitions? Do you know what "stack" works best for your hotel to achieve your desired results?

If your focus is on growing a brand and increasing its property holdings it is important to create a high-quality "stack" of successful hardware, software, systems, and processes. With the right infrastructure in place, you can quickly, affordably, and consistently deploy your systems at each new property.

13. Video Surveillance

Does your property have the proper video security to protect against litigation and give your guests peace of mind?

A carefully considered hotel video surveillance system can secure your building and facilities, while keeping your guests safe from theft and allowing you to track all visitors. In addition, proper surveillance can uncover potential employee theft and protect your property from lawsuits.

14. Data Collection

Do you collect data on your daily processes and long-term trends? Are you analyzing the data that your systems are collecting? Does your data play any part in long-term strategy or new investments?

The collection of big data allows hotels to identify trends. Data collection can drive efficiency and improvement in revenue management, guest experience, housekeeping services, and maintenance schedules, as well as many other areas.

15. Ongoing IT Management

Are you confident that all of your systems are up-to-date, patched, licensed, and operating as they should? Do you have a reliable and fast source for IT support?

Technology is ingrained in every level of the hospitality industry. It is not enough just to install your technology and hope for the best. It must be continually managed and supported.

On-going IT audits, patches and upgrades, and licensing is a continual task that ensures the productivity and reliability of all systems. That's why you need a committed partner looking after your IT.

Is Your IT Behind The Times?

Hotels and other members of the hospitality industry need to get on board and adopt new technology—or else they may be left behind.

Your first step is to recognize that you need to take technology seriously if you want to enhance the high-touch nature of your services. The next step is to know that you don't have to do it alone.

All Mountain Technologies can assist you in finding the right IT solutions for ALL of these questions so you can enhance the quality of your guests' experiences at your property.

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